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AN APPEAL

TO THE

MINISTERS AND MEMBERS

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

UNDER THE JURISDICTION

OF THE

SYNOD OF CANADA,

ON THE QUESTION OF ADHERENCE TO THE CHURCH OF
SCOTLAND AS BY LAW ESTABLISHED,

BY THE REV. HENRY ESSON,

Minister of St. Gabriel Street Church, Montreal.

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**MONTREAL:**

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## PREFACE.

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THE Author of this appeal feels it to be due to himself and to his Brethren, who may differ from him in their view of the question discussed, to state that he has been impelled by an imperative sense of duty to engage late and loath, in the perilous task of expounding and vindicating a cause to which, notwithstanding many late defections, he believes that the Synod of our Church are irrevocably pledged by their own declarations as well as by the most sacred obligations of truth and moral duty. He sincerely regrets that none of his Brethren better qualified for the task, have come forward in a cause which is worthy of the ablest champion, and in a crisis which makes it almost a crime to be silent. If any part of his statements or reasonings be thought to bear hard against the character and proceedings of any of the Ministers or Ecclesiastical Judicatories, he can say conscientiously, that he has set down nought in malice, and if in a crisis like the present when the greatest interests of the Church are in jeopardy, in acting upon the ancient maxim, "Sacrifice only to truth," he has been constrained to utter a word that may for a moment wound the sensibility of any brother, he can sincerely say that he has felt it to be one of the painful necessities of duty.

For the crude and undigested form in which he presents this appeal to the public he begs to apologize, and to throw himself upon the good nature and indulgence of his readers.

MONTREAL, *June 2<sup>d</sup>*, 1844.

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# AN APPEAL

TO THE MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

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THE object of the present appeal, is with all possible brevity and simplicity, to demonstrate that a steadfast adherence to the course to which the synod is solemnly pledged, by its own public and reiterated declarations, is the only one consistent with Christian principle and sound ecclesiastical policy, which is left open to adoption, and affords the only ground of hope, that the immediate disruption, perhaps the ultimate dissolution and ruin of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, can be effectually prevented.

That we may exhibit a clear and comprehensive view of the whole subject, in such a form and order, as to bring within a moderate compass, all the main facts and arguments involved in the question, and which must be borne in mind in forming a sound judgment of its merits; it will be proper first of all to expound, briefly, the great principles which lie at the foundation of the controversy, to ascertain how far their truth and importance, their conformity to scripture, and their essential bearing upon the vital interests of the Christian Church, *impose upon all a moral obligation* to defend and maintain them, and to sympathize and co-operate with those who may be called in the providence of God to strive and to suffer in their vindication.— We shall next show that the synod are called by a

regard, to dignified consistency, to good faith, and the most sacred moral obligations, to hold fast their principles as set forth in the resolutions of 1841, 1842. &c., and upon the basis of these principles, to assert and maintain the entire and absolute independence of our Church. These views will be found to be corroborated by the fact, that all the truly Protestant Churches of Christendom, have, with one voice concurred, as it were by acclamation to sanction the principles for which the Free Church of Scotland has been contending, and have in the most unequivocal and emphatic manner condemned the course followed by the Establishment.

Having thus discussed the question so far as it involves principle and moral obligation, we shall next try it by the criterion of expediency and sound enlightened views of ecclesiastical policy—we shall consider how the solid and permanent interests of the Canadian Church, temporal and spiritual, are likely to be affected by the proposed *adherence* to the Established Church; concluding with the enquiry, what are the adherents to principle and consistency called to do in the present emergency, either to prevent disruption; or—if that cannot be—to organize a new Church upon an independent basis.

The question of *non-intrusion*, as it is popularly termed, which led to the disruption of the parent Church in Scotland, and now threatens to destroy the external unity of that of Canada, may be briefly exhibited in its leading principles in a popular and familiar form, so that all may understand its nature and appreciate its merits.

All who believe the word of God, must admit that Christianity is a purely divine institution, having its own peculiar economy and government, its own laws and ordinances, unlike those of the king-

doms of this world—"But ye are" says the Apostle Peter, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." All then are called to co-operate in maintaining the purely spiritual character of this divine institute—Kings, Magistrates, Patrons, Pastors, and People—Nothing can be done by all or any of them, in opposition to the great end and design of that kingdom, which "is not of this world," *without resisting the authority of God's word and will.*

As the visible Church has been established to preach the gospel to the poor, to preserve, propagate, and perpetuate the knowledge and influence of divine truth, to administer the ordinances and discipline, by which Christians are made wise unto salvation—the paramount importance of a faithful and devoted ministry to the purity and efficiency of a christian Church, must be manifest to all. The greatest merit therefore, of any ecclesiastical polity, is to make the most effectual provision for securing the appointment of faithful ministers, precluding as much as possible every hazard of the intrusion of such as are unqualified, unsuitable, unacceptable, or even less worthy and effective, than it was possible to have installed. While it is due to the State, that none should be permitted, under its peculiar sanction and patronage, to fill the office of a public teacher of religion and morals, who is not a loyal subject, a good citizen; and while it belongs to the Clergy and other divinely appointed rulers of the Church generally, in their proper judicatories, to try and prove the qualifications of every Candidate for the office of the holy ministry, so far as science, literature, and theology are requisite elements of the sacred profession; who shall deny that there is a third party not the least interested in the result—the *People* the *immortal souls*,

of which he is called to be the overseer, to watch for them as one that must give account unto God ; since it is for their edification and salvation, that the gospel ministry, and the Church itself, have been ordained of God. And as it is essential to this end, that "he be suited to their capacities," as it is well expressed in the language of the popular call, and be perfectly qualified to fulfil the work of an Evangelist among them, (i. e.) to speak in a language which they can understand, which is capable of winning the attention, the confidence, the hearts of his hearers—interesting, edifying, comforting, and refreshing their souls; and, as the modes of instruction are as diversified as the capacities and conditions of the hearers, it is undeniable that the hearers themselves are the only competent judges of the suitableness of the pastor to their capacities—that main qualification, without which, he is altogether unfit to be their pastor—and that their decided opposition on this ground, if the great end of the gospel be not utterly disregarded, must be held an insurmountable bar to his admission. Besides it is plain that none but a *renewed man* can discern spiritual things—can savor, the things that be of God—a plain, illiterate peasant therefore, who has been enlightened in the saving knowledge of divine truth, and is practically imbued with the spirit of the gospel, must be a better judge than the wise and the learned, after the flesh. And as the people are the only competent judges of this part of his qualifications, on which the usefulness of the pastor mainly depends it appears to be one of the most certain and self-evident truths, that the call or the consent at least, of the majority of the people—who are to form the members of his flock—to his appointment, is the most indispensable of all requisites to constitute the



legitimate title and standing of a Christian pastor. There does not seem any reason for excluding the popular call or veto, save those spurious or infidel maxims of worldly wisdom, state expediency, or priestly policy, which to admit, would be to exterminate genuine religion out of the world, to substitute priestly and political craft for the simplicity of the gospel—"the pure and peaceable wisdom from above," and to open a door to unbounded corruption—to sacerdotal and secular tyranny in the Church.

The very fact that a call, however it may, in these latter days of our Church's decline from her first love and pureness of faith, discipline and government, have become no more than a name, a shadow, demonstrates beyond all controversy that was the mind and will of the first fathers and founders of the Church of Scotland. They felt that the sacred bond between pastor and flock, by which the minister, in the popular and pithy phraseology of Scotland, is said *to be married to his Church*, is one, which implies the mutual free will, the equal consent of the two contracting parties, is one, therefore, in which any force, coercion, or violation of freedom, especially when exercised against the weaker party, *the bride*, is worse than iniquitous, it is cruel it is sacrilegious. Surely in the dread responsibility of that sacred and solemn contract, by which one is united to a Christian flock as the shepherd and bishop of souls, "to cherish them," in the language of the apostle, "as a nurse cherisheth her children," there must be implied the undoubted right of a christian people, to have that minister who, with literary and theological qualifications, unites the not less essential merit of being suitable and acceptable to those whom "he is to serve in the gospel of Christ."

Let me not be supposed unfaithful to the cause of my order, in the maintenance of all our just rights and interests, when I protest, with all emphasis and solemnity, against the absurd and abominable doctrine, that *the living, as it is called*—the temporal provision for the minister, or his temporal interests and prospects, in any view, ought to be for a moment weighed against the paramount consideration of *the spiritual interests* of his flock. *I challenge* that minister, who is obnoxious to all the loss and damage of his temporal prospects and professional credit, by the decided refusal of a congregation to accept him as their pastor, to satisfy his own conscience, or the mind of any impartial Christian, who believes the Gospel, and knows the vast responsibility of him who is put in trust with the cure of souls, that it can be lawful for him, as the ambassador of the meek, lowly, and self-denied Saviour, *even to suffer himself to be intruded into that charge*—to be forced, by the civil power, it may be at the point of the bayonet, upon a reclaiming protesting people. He cannot, he dare not lay his hand upon his heart and say, that he is acting in the spirit of his Divine Master. He cannot, without a misgiving of heart and a faltering of the tongue, invoke the blessing of God upon his self-obtruded ministry. Even were he sure that he might soon render his ministry a blessing, and make himself personally acceptable and beloved by all, he cannot deny that this would only be a rare exception to a general rule, and that the example of his intrusion is of such evil influence as to outweigh all the good that he can do, even granting, what never can be proved, that his assurance of ultimate usefulness is well founded, or that he could not have done as much in any other sphere.

In answer to the objection against the *non-intrusion*

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principle, (upon which a very undue stress is laid), that it tends to produce in Christian congregations animosities and schisms, it is sufficient to state the simple undeniable fact, that one minister who is unfaithful, unblessed in his ministry, is chargeable with greater guilt in the sight of God and man than the incendiary who kindles up civil war, and sets the hand of every man against his brother; for the one only causes the loss of mortal life—the death of the body—the other is the fearful agent of ruin, to what is better than life, to the soul which cannot die—which worlds could not purchase or redeem. Try it by any test you please, look at either time or eternity, and it is impossible to deny that a faithful Gospel ministry is the greatest of all blessings to a people—to a nation—that its influence even in one parish or village, in the most sequestered nook or corner of the land, can never be sufficiently prized. If so, there can be no greater good or evil, and therefore no greater desert or demerit than to secure or to sacrifice this blessing. No advantage can compensate, no evil can outweigh its loss. We may confidently conclude, therefore, that the system, however excellent in other respects, which gives any warrant or affords any occasion for such a sacrilegious violation of God's Holy Sanctuary, and of the rights of a Christian people is wholly abhorrent to the genius and tenor of the gospel, it is a flagrant violation of the most sacred obligations of all (whether civil or ecclesiastical authorities) who are called to preside over the interests of the Church. All who exercise such violence are guilty of high treason against the crown rights of the Great Head of the Church. The principle of non-intrusion therefore is vital, essential to the *being* no less than to the *well-being and well-working of the Church*, which is called in scripture the Body of Christ,

the Spouse of Christ. What less, therefore, shall we say, than that it is the first of duties on the part of the state, the church rulers, and the people, to defend and maintain to the uttermost the purity and inviolability of these fundamental laws of the constitution, so to speak, of Christ's Kingdom, the Church.

But further, in an established Church, like that of Scotland, where there is opened to the Candidate the prospect of a secure independent, honorable living, and if he choose to make it so, a very easy and indolent one—a temptation is presented which no one acquainted with human nature, will deny, to be formidable to the purity and prosperity of a Christian Church, alluring those to enter it, who are not actuated by a spirit corresponding with the solemn responsibilities of the Gospel Ministry, and tending, therefore, without extraordinary circumspection and vigilance on the part of the ecclesiastical Rulers, by a process neither slow nor uncertain in its operation, to debase and corrupt *that order*, on whose character and faithfulness mainly depends the prosperity of a Church. To the consideration of the danger which such an establishment presents add the concurrent tendency of the law of patronage, and who can hesitate for a moment to justify the conduct of those who advocated the passing of the veto law in mitigation or counteraction of the *deteriorating influence of these two concurrent causes* upon the character of our mother Church.

These views are amply confirmed by the testimony of history, for it is undeniable that, from the period of the enactment of the law of patronage, soon after the revolution, the Church of Scotland underwent a process of rapid deterioration. Whatever she retained of spiritual purity and power, from that date down to the

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commencement of the present century must be placed to the account of the continued influence of the fiery trials through which she had passed in what may be justly regarded as her palmy days, filling up nearly the whole period of her history, from the Reformation to the Revolution. *Then*, all the population of Scotland with the exception of a few Quakers and Roman Catholics, were gathered under her maternal wings. Dissent can scarcely be said to have been felt, until the halcyon days of patronage and moderatism, and the sunshine of state favor and endowment had caused a change to pass over the spirit of our Clergy. Then the process of exhaustion commenced. The first secession led by the Erskines, drained the Church ultimately of one third of her members; farther inroads were made upon her, by other denominations of dissenters. And lastly, the non-intrusion question has reduced her to a mere fraction of the population of Scotland, probably not exceeding one third of the whole and that too, in a downward progress of daily decrease.

The testimony of history thus concurs with every view of enlightened principle and sound ecclesiastical policy to prove the wisdom, nay the necessity of *the reformation* to the advocacy of which the non-intrusionists have sacrificed their connection with the state, and all their temporal endowments. While not a word can be said in extenuation of the conduct of the opposite party in abandoning the cause of principles of the most vital moment to the purity of the church, and betraying to the ambitious usurpation of the civil power the ancient rights of Scotland and her Church, dearly bought and magnanimously defended for ages, the worst that can be said of the Free Church is *that she deferred too much to the preten-*

sions of the Civil power—that *she was too moderate in her demands*. The remedy she sought was far too lenient for the disease.

But it will be said what has all this to do with the Church of Canada? Have we not the most ample liberty that we can desire, and are we to sacrifice, or even to peril our ecclesiastical unity, or our temporal endowments for the sake of Utopian, or, at least, purely abstract principles, which have no immediate bearing, or practical application in a land where there is no state connection, no church patronage, but the voluntary principle as it is called, may be said to be in universal operation, and the will of the people to be all in all? We answer, that the obligation of bearing our testimony to great truths, of asserting and vindicating great principles, and of sympathizing and co-operating, whenever we are so called in the providence of God, with those who are contending for them, even should it be at the most imminent peril of the loss of worldly goods, of temporal advantages, or of life itself, is of a *moral nature*, sacred and inviolable as the laws of the moral world, universal, eternal, and immutable as truth itself, and can never be suspended or relaxed by any change or diversity of time, place, or circumstances.

It is bad logic, and worse morality, to reason from considerations of expediency against the claims of truth and duty. To set up the calculations of our personal interests as ministers, or of temporal provision or endowment as a church, against the supremacy of God's moral law, is nothing less than sacrilege and impiety. In all the reasonings of the advocates of adherence to the Established Church it is of special importance to be noted, that they argue upon *the plea of expediency*, that they reason not as Christian men and Christian Ministers on

principles of sound Ethics and Scripture truth, but as disciples of the ancient schools of Epicurus and Aristippus, or of the modern Utilitarian philosophy of Jeremy Bentham. They place the question in fact upon a false ground, or rather they mistake wholly its nature; forgetting that in every question which is to be determined on the *ground of principle, the plea of expediency cannot so much as be listened to*. Their reasoning, therefore, is altogether inapplicable and worthless, it is worse than illogical, it involves a moral as well as a theological heresy. For unless it can be shewn that the principles of this controversy do not involve the idea of moral obligation, that they do not touch and affect, and that vitally too, the spiritual interests of the Church of Christ, or the glorious indivisible sovereignty of its Supreme Head, or that in other words, as elements indispensable to her purity and efficiency, to her well-being and well-working, they are not fundamental laws or principles of Christ's Kingdom or Church—they have done nothing to the purpose—they have left untouched the main question on which the whole controversy is suspended. The cause of the advocates of moral principle and consistency remains standing in all its strength, supported by the Omnipotent force of truth, the infallible will and word of God. It would serve as a very apt illustration of the absurdity of our opponents, and it is no fault of ours if it wears a ludicrous aspect, were we to propose to them so curious a problem for their solution as this—What amount of moral truth and righteousness, in their estimation, may be warrantably sacrificed or bartered in exchange for temporal endowments, or merely secular considerations? Let them shew us their balance, their scales and weights, in which physical and metaphysical elements, moral and material interests are to be weighed against each other, and the



balance of comparative value ascertained—and above all let them remember that we shall rigidly exact from them the evidence of their being stamped with the Divine seal and authority. The task imposed upon the learned Sorbonnist, to twist a rope of sand, was reasonable compared with that to which our opponents have virtually applied themselves. When the mathematician can tell us how many lengths of hours, days and weeks would be required as equivalent in dimensions to miles, leagues, and degrees—when quantities of time and space can be put in the same balance, measured, weighed, and compared, so as to lead to satisfactory conclusions, or trustworthy calculations and estimates, we shall be disposed to listen to the very peculiar logic of our antagonists. It is easy to see that if we are not under any moral obligation to embrace and hold fast the principles of the Free Church of Scotland, we should be acting the part of fools and madmen to disturb the peace and endanger the unity of our Church, and jeopard, as some may think, our tenure of lands and State endowments. Our opponents have only to make out clearly and demonstratively that we are under no bond of *moral obligation* to maintain these principles, and the victory is theirs; no more can be said to make their triumph complete. But it is too evident that at the bottom of these elaborate reasonings, founded upon the plea of expediency and utilitarianism, there lurks a secret consciousness, a latent misgiving, that the question will not bear to be discussed, nay not even to be exposed to the public eye, in the aspect—in which alone it is at all to the purpose to contemplate it—of *moral principle*; for assuredly, if it be consistent with right, to hold fast our temporal goods, it would be worse than imprudent, it would be insane, immoral, wantonly to sacrifice them. But as we shall proceed to prove, by their own pub-



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lished and reiterated declarations they themselves have swept away every ground on which such a plea could now be established. We desire no better or stronger evidence for their conviction than their own testimony. Constituting themselves judges, jury, and witnesses, in their own cause, out of their own mouth we shall condemn them.

The following resolutions were passed unanimously, in the Synod, which met at Kingston, in 1841:—

The Synod called for the Report of the Committee appointed to prepare an Expression of Sympathy with the parent Church, which was given in by Mr. McGill, and read. After reasoning, the following resolutions, drawn up by the Committee were unanimously adopted by the Synod:

1. That this Synod, in view of the trials through which the Established Church of Scotland is passing, and the eventful crisis at which these have arrived, do record our most affectionate sympathy with her, and our earnest prayer for her success in her struggle against every encroachment of the civil power on her spiritual independence and jurisdiction, and that she may be a faithful witness to all Christian nations of the true principles according to which the civil magistrate should support the visible kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. That this Synod, enjoying, as we do, peculiar opportunities for witnessing the great evils that befall a nation when the true religion is not duly countenanced and maintained by the civil authorities, evils which have long in the Divine goodness been averted from Scotland, regard it as a great calamity, that collision has occurred between the ecclesiastical and civil tribunals in Scotland, and record our fervent hope that such steps may be taken as shall restore the interrupted harmony, so that the Church may be supported in her labours in her own sphere, and the state, as heretofore may have increasing evidence that the Church is the best bulwark of order, improvement, and happiness among the people.

3. That this Synod experience the highest gratification in observing the enlightened and holy spirit that animates the Parent Church, her advancing internal purity and zeal, the removal of hindrances which stood in the way of the return of such of her children as had seceded from her communion; and we do sincerely trust that the Scottish National Church, adhering to her primitive and scriptural standards, will ere long exhibit to Christendom such a spectacle of unity in the faith and such an example of scriptural connexion with the state, as shall give assurance, that the Lord Jesus Christ for whose Crown and Sovereignty she is contending will make the land an heritage that the Lord has blessed.

4. That this Synod petition Her Majesty the Queen, and the Imperial Parliament, in support of all the just rights and claims of the Church of Scotland, and in particular that the wishes of the people be duly regarded in the settlement of their Ministers, and that the secular courts be prevented from all interference with the spiritual concerns of the Church.\*

By order of the Synod, a letter from the pen of the Moderator, Mr. George, was addressed to the General Assembly of the United States, from which the following paragraph, bearing upon these resolutions, is extracted. It is dated July, 1841:—

At a crisis like the present in the history of the Church of Scotland when we are looking with anxious solicitude for the development of the divine purposes regarding her, we cannot but be deeply affected with the expressions of your kind sympathy in her behalf. In her assertion of spiritual independence, in her struggles against injurious usurpations of secular power, she is once more revived to the spirit which actuated her in the best periods of her history. But when we consider the principles which govern those who desire to retain her in bondage, and the power which they can wield to accomplish their end; and when we look at the Popish and semi-infidel liberalism so eagerly combining with the Erastianism of the State to work her overthrow, we cannot altogether suppress the apprehension that momentous changes will result in some of her external relations. But for her suffering in such a cause and its issue we give way, no not for a moment either to fear or despondency!!! On the contrary, we cherish the hope that she will come out of the trial as gold purified by the fire, and that her martyr-testimony will awaken a reforming spirit in those lands where the domination of the civil power has long subverted the liberty and corrupted the purity of the Church of Christ.

These sentiments were confirmed by the Synod at Montreal, in 1842, in the words of the following resolution:—

That the Synod, continuing to cherish the sentiments recorded by them during last Session respecting the struggle which the Parent Church is at present maintaining against the encroachments of the Civil power, and cordially concurring in the great principles asserted in the resolutions passed by the Commission of the General Assembly, at their meeting held on the 25th of August, 1841, and communicated to this Synod, instruct the Committee of Correspondence to give unequivocal expression to the views of the Synod in this respect in the letter which is now to be transmitted to the Colonial Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

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\* See Appendix, No. 1.

Resolutions of a similar tenor were moved by Mr. Gale, at the Synod held at Toronto, 1843, and passed by a great majority, 28 to 11.\*

All these declarations bear the stamp and seal of the Synod; and all, with the exception of those passed last year, *after the disruption of the Church of Scotland* received the unanimous sanction of its members.

Three years have elapsed since the mind of the Synod was first proclaimed to the world in its printed minutes; and, till last session, no one entered any dissent, protest, or complaint, or so much as hinted a desire of qualification in the matter, or in the terms of the resolutions. Never was the deliberate, solemn, and unanimous sense of any body of men more clearly uttered and emitted forth to the world. It is certain that the Synod is bound hand and foot—every minister, and every member, not only those who were present voting and voicing, but those who were not, since ample time had been afforded them of giving in their protest and dissent, had they been so minded. It is impossible now to retract with a good grace—no, not with any kind of decency or consistency. “There is no place for repentance—none for pardon left.” I hesitate not to challenge our opponents themselves to say whether it will not lay open the character of a body which in all matters of faith, integrity, and honour ought, like Cesar’s wife, to be above suspicion, to the heaviest reproach—the most overwhelming condemnation. And what practical contradiction can be considered more palpable and emphatic than that which is exemplified in the proceedings of the ministers and judicatures of the Church, who, in the most irregular and unpresbyterial manner, have given in their adherence to the Established Church, in defiance of all ecclesiastical order, in contempt of the authority of the one only su-

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\* See Appendix, No. 2.

preme court or tribunal of our Church ? This is, with a witness, setting practice and action in contradiction to profession. Either the fervent outburst of sympathy with the glorious strivings of the Free Church, and our indignant protest against the Civil power, and the Civil Courts, were a solemn farce, our professions mere cant, the offspring of adulation and sycophancy, or of falsehood and hypocrisy, or we are now under the influence of *interested calculation*, or pusillanimous and sordid fears of temporal loss, and the spoiling of our worldly goods, recanting the generous and united tribute which we spontaneously offered. Such conduct the world would stigmatize in one of its own children as dishonour, baseness, treachery. What is it then in a body of *ecclesiastics* when they meet in supreme and solemn consistory to legislate and judge ? Is this a matter to be thought lightly of ? Will the stain upon the faith or honour of the church, or rather of the clergy, be soon or easily wiped out ? Will the reasoners who put expediency in the balance to be weighed against truth and principle tell us if they can, how much endowment, or what amount of State patronage, or Residuary connection will compensate, or will replace to our church or to our ministers and judicatories the loss of character, of moral esteem, of public confidence, and popular affection ? Were it certain that in declaring our church independent, and disavowing, or dissolving, if that be the word, all connection with the Establishment, we should forfeit thereby our title to the clergy lands—what then ? Is this evil to be averted, to be provided against, by the sacrifice of faith, honour, principle—of ecclesiastical, moral, and religious consistency—by acting with base ingratitude to the Free Church, by the treacherous betrayal of her cause to the adversary ? For have we not given the kiss—the embrace of a disciple to the Free Church, and shall we,

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This is, with a contradiction to sympathy with the our indignant pro- Courts, were a the offspring of and hypocrisy, *erested calcula-* temporal loss, and ng the generous offered. Such of its own chil- What is it then eet in supreme dge? Is this e stain upon the f the clergy, be oners who put d against truth h endowment, iduary connec- r church or to f character, of ular affection? n independent, the word, all should forfeit then? Is this y the sacrifice l, moral, and ingratitude to l of her cause the kiss—the nd shall we,

Judas-like, turn the next moment to betray her and her cause? God forbid. If we act in this manner we shall lose a thousand-fold more than it is possible to gain, what can never be retrieved or replaced—what cannot even be calculated. Faith would be violated, sacred principle betrayed, our honour sullied and trampled in the dust. Our infamy will be proclaimed to all the world, and all the world will cry shame to us.

If these principles were worthy of the struggles which were made for their vindication, and which, prior to the disruption of the parent Church, commanded the warmest expression of our unanimous sympathy, it cannot surely be pretended, that they have lost ought of their weight and obligation, by the still nobler sacrifices, which they have subsequently cost their glorious champions. The old proverb says, only less emphatically than the example of the adherents of the Scottish establishment, "*virtus landatur et alget.*"—After declaring with eloquent vehemence, as in the resolutions of the synod, their sympathy with the cause and principles of the Free Church—while the echo of their faithless professions, is yet sounding in the public ear—they turn round to embrace, nay, to enter into a bond or covenant of brotherhood and unity, with those who have betrayed the prerogatives of their Redeemer's Crown, and trampled upon the ancient and invaluable patrimony of Scotland's Church, bought and sealed with the blood of our fathers.

"What shall we do for the *hundred talents* of silver?" says the reasoner from expediency, the Utilitarian Philosopher, the worldly-wise calculating Divine. Faith, honour and genuine piety answer, "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this"—"The gold and the silver are mine," saith the Lord. "Give unto God the things that are God's," and fear not Cæsar and all the powers

or principalities in the world "for if the Lord be on our side, we need not fear what man can do." "If God be for us, who can be against us?" But, if we dishonour him, and forsake him, like Demas, loving this present world, woe is unto us; for the prosperity, well-being, and glory of a Church, are not to be purchased, neither can they be replaced by "thousands of gold and silver."—"Not by power nor by might, but by my spirit, saith the Lord."

Just imagine what would be the position of our synod—what the aspect in which it must be exposed to the view of all the world, should the advocates of adherence ultimately prevail. It will stand alone in its glory; the only satellite, to revolve around the all deserted orb of the Church of Scotland, by law established. It will form a striking contrast with our sister synod of England, in her recent noble decision, reminding us of the words of our great Dramatist, "Look on this picture and on that, the counterfeit presentment of two brothers, &c." On the side of the Free Church you behold a glorious company—the synod of Ulster, the synod of England, the united band of missionaries to the Jews and Gentiles—all without one dissenting voice, separating from connection with the Establishment—all without hesitation or division renouncing her communion.

All the truly Protestant Churches of Britain, Europe, and America, make common cause with the Free Church, manifest the most cordial and unqualified sympathy, and are prepared to co-operate with her in all that pertains to the interests of our common Christianity. Have any of all these breathed a word of sympathy or condolence, with the Established Church, at a season of extraordinary affliction, when she is left desolate—deserted by more than one half of her mem-

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bers? What a mighty corroboration of the truth, of the views and principles above stated, that so many Churches throughout the whole Christian world without any bias or collusion, should thus simultaneously unite with one heart and one voice, in bearing testimony in favor of the cause for which we plead? And how shall we appear, coming forward late and loath to place ourselves under the banner of a Church thus universally abandoned by the Christian world, attaching ourselves as her ally or vassal, after we had pledged our faith, by vows and protestations of sympathy, to her rival? What construction can possibly be given to such a course, at such a time and in such circumstances, but, that it is the result of selfish calculations and sordid fears? It will not be difficult to prove the value of an adherence thus extorted from us out of season—at the eleventh hour; even the Established Church of Scotland herself, must in her secret soul despise such selfishness and shuffling. A body more fallen, more despised, more shorn of all that can give honour or estimation in the sight of God or man, than our Church would be in this position—it is impossible for me to imagine. Her debasement and humiliation would be complete—almost without precedent or parallel. The Parent Church has not at least incurred the guilt and infamy of deserting and betraying a cause which she once warmly espoused, and sacredly vowed to support. The Synod of Canada, like the renegades from the Free Church, stigmatized as *the forty Thieves* would share all her obloquy with the unspeakable aggravation of the dereliction and betrayal of the cause to which she had pledged herself as it were but yesterday. The Churches which now disown and stand aloof from her and feel themselves precluded by the sacred obligations of principle from all communion with her, how will they regard the Synod of Canada? They will shun



its communion as pollution. It will stand forth more especially in this land of universal Christian liberty and Church independence, as a perfect solecism—as an ecclesiastical monstrosity. It is almost absurd to contemplate a connection with a Church, at the distance of three thousand miles, whose spirit, constitution, and circumstances are in absolute contrast with those of the Churches on this Continent, where Ministers are dependent in a great measure, and so far as we can see, must ever be so, on the free-will attachment, and voluntary offerings of the hearers. There is in fact an utter incompatibility between our position—the very basis upon which our Church rests, and that of a State Establishment. Such a connection, while, even upon the showing of its advocates—it would be a name, a nothing, of no conceivable advantage to either of the parties—would be in the highest degree incongruous and embarrassing—would be indeed, sewing a piece of new cloth on an old garment, with the ultimate perhaps, early effect, of making the rent worse. It is very clear that such a union, like a forced marriage, not founded upon principles of wisdom, similitude of circumstances or sympathy of character, but upon interested calculations of advantage, could have no tendency to further the great spiritual end of a Church—her well being or well working. And while it would sever the Church of Canada from communion with nearly all the rest of the truly Protestant world, it would bring her into immediate and necessary collision with the Free Church, causing first our disruption, and next, in all probability, the utter extinction of the fragment which might adhere to the Establishment. In fine, the course proposed by the advocates of adherence, would place our Church in a false position—would alienate from us the confidence and sym-

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pathy of all other Protestant Churches in the old and in the new world; in following it, we should be running counter in fact, to universal sentiment and practice, we should be fighting against the spirit of the age.

But we should not do justice to the cause of truth and right principle, in this controversy, if we did not scan a little more narrowly the conduct and course of the party with whom we are dealing. The real schismatics—the men who are following divisive courses—who are seeking to destroy the unity of the Church, not only violating their own solemn pledge, but, should they succeed in their present aim, bringing down upon their own heads, and inflicting upon our Synod and clergy an indelible stigma of moral reproach—are at the same time, trampling upon all Presbyterian order, by giving in their adherence, either as individual ministers, or subordinate judicatories to the Established Church, in utter defiance of the authority of our Supreme Ecclesiastical Tribunal. Nothing could have been more wanton or presumptuous than such a proceeding. Such irregularity and insubordination, especially when we look to its possible and even probable consequences, is more than censurable—it is absolutely criminal. There was nothing to occasion all this precipitation—all this violation of order and decency. Why not wait for the meeting of our Synod? Or why not make a requisition to call an early and extraordinary meeting? Why did they not protest, and appeal to next meeting, and forbear meanwhile to take any decided step in a matter so momentous in its consequences, which could not fail to create infinite embarrassment to themselves and to the Synod? They have much to answer for to God and man. I do not envy those individuals and bodies the renown which they

have purchased for themselves. They will take their place in history by the side of the Presbytery of Strathbogie, or the patron and presentee of the Presbytery of Auchterarder. They will have their fame, and let them rejoice in it; but far be it from me and from my friends!

But this is not all. The shame and mischief of this wanton and unpardonable breach of all order and respect for constituted authority does not lie wholly, or perhaps even chiefly, at the door of the ministers or presbyteries of Canada that have given in their adherence. They, it would seem, are only one of the parties. These proceedings within our Church have been originated and instigated by the very unaccountable method which the Established Church and her functionaries have adopted, in their intercourse and correspondence with the Colonial Church, subsequently to the disruption,—a course which contrasts very unfavourably with that of the Free Church, and may be the means of entailing as much dishonour upon its authors as it may unhappily create mischief in a church, which was, at the time, all but unanimous on the question. Instead of following the only regular and legitimate course of addressing a letter, according to their former practice, to the Moderator of the Synod, circulars were sent to all the ministers individually. The event has shown how well the stratagem was conceived, for it has sown division, and paved the way, in all probability, to disruption. And should this inglorious triumph crown the device, its authors no doubt will be visited with that measure of righteous indignation, on the part of the Christian world, which is due to those who cause the most deplorable divisions, by means the most dishonorable. In this view of the spirit and character of this most mischievous proceeding, I am borne out, I believe, by subsequent acts of like nature,

At the meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal, preceding that in which the question of adherence or connection came under discussion, two letters from leading members of the Colonial Committee were laid upon the Table, in which the prospect of pecuniary aid from the Colonial Funds of the Establishment, was held out to those who were willing to receive it on the prescribed condition of *bona fide* adherence. It became evident in the interval between this and next meeting, that several of our ministers had been in correspondence with the Colonial Committee of the Establishment, and had either applied for, or accepted aid on this condition. How many more may be influenced by the promise, at least by the hope or expectation of such aid it is not for me to conjecture. One thing I will say that it is not easy for poor human nature to stand strong and unfaltering, when plied with such temptations. It is not a little remarkable, that in this single Presbytery, in which the resolutions of adherence to the Establishment were carried by an overwhelming majority, three of the members had accepted livings in the Establishment, one of whom, then on his way to Scotland, voted with the majority in favour of Dr. Mathieson's overture and resolutions; two who were present and voted, had accepted the allowance, and were pledged of course by that act to adherence. Time, the great revealer of secrets, will lay open perhaps, the whole extent and magnitude of the influence which has created already a revolt of two Presbyteries and not a few individual Ministers against the authority of the Synod, and paved the way, as I fear, for a far more formidable and fatal defection of the people, from Ministers and Church judicatories who, to use the gentlest terms, by such irregular and ill-timed proceedings, have rendered themselves obnoxious to very natural and plausible suspicions, of ma-

king merchandise of the rights, liberties, and interests of their Church, and Esau-like selling their divine birth-right for a mess of pottage, or a paltry pension. Whether we contemplate the peculiarity of the time and the circumstances in which these transactions took place, or the relation in which the Parent and Colonial Churches then stood to each other, it is impossible to place it in any point of view that would reconcile it with just notions of fair and honourable dealing, or of a sound Christian policy. Whether we regard the principle of the proceeding, or the tendency of that influence, which, it could not but be foreseen, it must exert upon some at least, of the Colonial Clergy in the existing crisis of the Colonial Church, it is impossible to vindicate it from the severest censure, as ill-timed and injudicious—if it can even escape the far heavier condemnation of corrupt and demoralizing policy. Such a mode of creating and extending ecclesiastical connection, ascendancy, and influence, is, to say the least, extremely equivocal.

These facts are stated for the purpose of determining on which side lies the guilt of following divisive courses. Who are creating schism, violating ecclesiastical order and thereby paving the way most wantonly and industriously for disruption? Look at the resolutions of the Synod already quoted, and let any honest and impartial reader judge whether such proceedings be not in utter defiance of all Presbyterial order, or ecclesiastical subordination, and what is infinitely worse, in extreme violation of the most solemn and sacred pledges. I challenge those who are most opposed to the principles for which I and the brethren who hold the same views are contending, to say which of the two conflicting parties are acting in conformity with their solemn pledges—are maintaining an honourable consistency—are going forward in the

straight path of duty, unshaken by apprehension of consequences, and in fine, are giving the best of all pledges, that however they may be supposed to err in judgment, they are not chargeable with the guilt of sinning against principle. In conclusion, I feel the most confident persuasion that the principles for which we contend, must obtain a speedy and triumphant ascendancy in the minds of the great body of the Presbyterian population; and I am still more firmly assured, that the course which we have adopted, must be approved by all candid and right-hearted men, as the only one consistent, with the regards which are due to character and moral principle. We resolve to adhere unswervingly to the path of duty, as we unhesitatingly embraced it when there was no immediate bias of hope, or fear to disturb the balance of judgment or conscience. We have not changed; let the public—let our opponents themselves, account for the change which has all at once, not in the happiest season or circumstances for a favourable construction, come over their spirit.

*They*, not *we*, are summoned to the bar of public opinion, impleaded there, and put upon their defence. The course which we now seek—which we have always sought to follow—is not extreme, like that of our antagonists. We have not even contemplated the project of adherence to the Free Church. If we be obnoxious to any reprehension, it is that rather of having fallen short in our manifestation of zeal and devotedness to her and to her glorious cause; it is that of having gone too far on the side of peace, conciliation, compromise. We seek simply independence, as necessary to maintain that character of integrity and honourable consistency, without which we are as salt without the savour, our respectability and usefulness as a church are gone for ever, and Ichabod may be written upon the gates and walls of our

Zion. The course which we regard as the only one which can preserve the peace and unity of the Canadian Church, while it is the only one that is at all consistent with the glory of God and the plainest obligations of conscience, is, at the same time, the safest, the one in which, if we are unanimous, we shall incur the least hazard of the forfeiture of temporalities and endowments. We believe, in maintaining the absolute independence of our church, we do no more than assert a right which can be clearly ascertained and demonstrated; and while we hold that we actually possess this independence, in the most absolute and unlimited sense of the term, even our antagonists do not, and cannot deny, that practically and substantially we have always enjoyed and exercised to the uttermost the rights and liberties of an Independent Church. In holding fast, with this independence, faith and a good conscience, in the full and steadfast recognition of the principles of the resolutions to which we have set our seal as a Synod, all that we require is fully absolved; and who dare say that less will satisfy the righteous demands of principle? Indeed I cannot sufficiently express my astonishment to find some, of whom I would have hoped better things, who will not, cannot deny, that they have been silent until the moment, when the Synod was called to encounter peril, for the principles to which *they*, not less than *we*, had set their seal, now presuming to inveigh against us, as if we were the troublers of Israel—as if we were men not sinned against but sinning, because we will not now consent to a dishonourable retreat. They contributed to bring the vessel of the Church into the midst of storm and peril, and would have us now concur with them in throwing principle and honour overboard, to save the freight from shipwreck.

But we come now to the most important and interesting view in which this question can be contemplated,

and one in which, if we can arrive at any clear and well-ascertained conclusion, no room will be left for future hesitation or discussion. Let us inquire what effect the connection proposed will have upon the spiritual interests of the Church—upon her character, progress, and prosperity. And since the spiritual interests of the Church cannot long be separated from her external and secular well-being, the argument will be like a two-edged sword, taking hold of those who reason on the ground of expediency, as well as those who look to the higher consideration of principle. In order to prepare the way for a satisfactory determination of this enquiry, I shall premise a few observations on the great requisites which are implied in the spiritual prosperity of our Colonial Church. The work of an Evangelist, in this land, it cannot be denied, is one which demands the most exalted qualifications and endowments of the most devoted missionary. The minister who fulfils all the quiet and regular routine of pastoral functions and parochial services among a population previously leavened and trained under a faithful ministry, it is easy to understand may be found altogether unequal to the efficient discharge of labours, and the patient endurance of hardships, privations, and sacrifices, incident to the Missionary, and which none are capable of enduring but those who, like the apostle, “count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, who count not their lives dear to them, if so be they may win souls to Christ.” The ministers of that Church,—which would prove an efficient organ for the evangelization of the scattered population of this vast wilderness, where religion will be found, to a lamentable extent, to be half deadened in the case of the fathers and first settlers, and almost extinct in the minds of their children, destitute as the latter are of all education, and both of them shut out from gospel



ordinances—ought to have in them the spirit of the most self-denied and devoted missionaries that go out to preach the gospel in heathen lands—ought to combine the fervour of the saint with the heroism of the martyr.

We have only to appeal to our familiar knowledge and experience of the comparative success of the various religious denominations in this land, in their several missions, to determine, with all the resistless evidence of fact, the truth of this position. The missionaries and evangelists who have been crowned with the most signal and uniform success—who have been most forward in pressing into the depths of the forest, to make the wilderness and its solitary and spiritually destitute inhabitants to be glad for them, have been sent forth, just as might have been expected, from the bosom of those sects and churches, which are most distinguished by a missionary spirit, such as the Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists. And how is their success to be accounted for? Is it in any measure the fruit of State connection, or of the possession of clergy lands and Church endowments? No, none of these. I am fully persuaded that nothing has more tended to paralyze the spiritual energies, and to retard the progress of our Church, than the undue stress which I fear has been laid by too many of our clergymen on those very endowments and emoluments which are derived from clergy lands, or from the bounty of Government. These have operated with a double influence, adverse both to the spiritual and temporal interests of our Church: first, in leading the clergy to look away to these foreign sources of support, when it would have been better in every respect that they had cast more their burden on the Lord, and, under him, on the people, and striving to entrench themselves in their hearts and affections had thereby secured far better and nobler resources, more ap-



appropriate to the spirit and character of a Christian Church. The same cause has operated to make the people cold and listless ; and in the opinion that their minister, in this enjoyment of State patronage and provision, was made nearly independent of their sympathy and support, they had nothing to quicken their attachment to him, or their interest in the cause of the Church at large. The natural and melancholy result has been a prevailing and growing indifference, extremely unpropitious both to its temporal and spiritual prosperity. However paradoxical it may seem to those who do not reflect, it is certain, that money which has so potent an influence and agency in the concerns and among the votaries of the world, has a very limited power in the service of the Church, and in the furtherance of its peculiar and most important interests. I have no doubt, therefore, that were all other sources and means of provision for our Church taken away, or dried up, and the people cast wholly upon their unaided energies and resources, the effect would be, in the first place, to drive away out of the field altogether those whom the purity and strength of Christian love and missionary zeal did not inspire, but in constraining the people, and the better part of their pastors, to throw themselves and the cause of divine truth more entirely upon God, and in quickening, uniting, purifying, and invigorating all the better elements of a church's spiritual life and expansiveness, to lay the broad, and deep, and enduring foundations of a growing prosperity, external and internal. I have no doubt, without intending to depreciate the value and importance of temporal endowments, that the world and its spirit and influence have enervated and deadened in some degree our Church in time past—have weighed down and oppressed her spiritual strength and energies, hindering at once their full developement and free exercise ; and I look forward without any fear

or dismay to the prospect of that impending revolution, which threatens our Church in this land, assured that,—should it please providence to sweep away all other sources of our hope and confidence, save those which never fail and never make ashamed—the loss of “the hundred talents of silver” will be more than compensated, if we are thereby led to take faster hold of Him who hath promised to be with his Church always to the end of the world, relying with full assurance of faith on his word, “the Lord is able to give thee much more than this.”

If we look back to the history of the Parent Church, in those periods when she was most pure and flourishing, we shall find that they were without exception, those in which she was cast into the furnace of adversity and persecution; she was never more mighty, more triumphant in all that constitutes the real power and glory of a Church, than when she was deserted by earth, impoverished and oppressed by the principalities and powers of this world, and driven from every other hope and confidence, save those of faith, prayer and patience, manifesting their divine power and efficacy, in the abundance of her works and labours of love, and sufferings and fiery trials, proving and perfecting the martyr spirit. If we partake in any measure of this spirit and would emulate the zeal, energy, and enterprize of those missionary sects, whose exertions have been crowned with most signal success in this land, we will begin by sympathising with and seeking the communion and co-operation of those religious bodies from whom we can derive such men as Duff and Wilson, such men as are now reviving Religion in the waste and desolate places of Scotland's Church and recalling the purest and palmiest days of her past history. What hope is there for the future if we adhere to the established Church, destitute as she appears to be of the mission-

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ary spirit. An exclusive connection with her (and exclusive it must be if it exist at all,) while it could impart no new infusion of spiritual life, vigour, or expansiveness, would as we have already seen, divide us from the communion of all other other evangelical denominations and would inevitably deprive us of the sympathy and patronage of the Free Church without which, judging of the future by the past, we should be like a stream cut off from the fountain, a branch lopped from its parent tree. For it cannot be denied that, to this section of the Church we owe nearly all that we now are—all that we have won in this land; they planted, watered, and nourished us, and taking us up, when we were helpless and neglected—have watched over us with paternal and fostering care, and have reared us up to the magnitude and maturity of a National Church. Our best missionaries and ministers have come forth from them, and if there be too much of the elements of Erastianism, I fear that they have been derived from the nether spring of that luke-warm Laodicean party from which they have separated, and with which some amongst us are blindly and perversely seeking an exclusive connection, which would cut us off from all communication with the upper spring of the Evangelical and missionary portion of the Church of our Fathers. If we separate our cause from that of the Free Church, we take away our vital influence and commit a suicidal act. The day that we conclude our union with the establishment, will sound our death knell. It is almost certain that the Church in this land without any sufficient spring, internal or external, of renovation and expansion, would soon wither and die—lingering and languishing through a few years of decline; she might live on dyingly, through the present generation, when her place would

know her no more forever. The Free Church and Protestants of other Evangelical denominations would grow by her decrease, would strengthen by her decay, until they filled the whole sphere which she now occupies; "The House of David waxing stronger and stronger," and "the house of Saul weaker and weaker."

The following facts prove how vain is any hope of spiritual benefit from such connection. Not fewer than forty clergymen were withdrawn from the Presbyterian Church of England to supply the vacant pulpits in Scotland after the disruption. All the Colonial Churches have been robbed or relieved of ministers, who have returned to Scotland, allured by the prospect of livings within the Establishment. Three have already been withdrawn from the single district of Montreal, and long, long may their deserted flocks look to the Church which has taken from them what she never gave, to replace the loss. For she has not one missionary, at this moment, either among Jews or Gentiles. Tell us not that this is no indication of her spiritual condition. She has buildings, funds, every thing in her hands, at the present moment, but men. She only lacks the spirit, the quickening spirit. The very mould and leaven of which missionaries are formed seem wanting to her; for with all the wealth of an Establishment, and the patronage of the State, she cannot, after a whole year's suspension of her missions—a whole year's search—find one man to take up one of those posts which have, for conscience sake, been relinquished by those who renounced, with the Connection, all their temporal provision, all their worldly prospects. Is this the nursing mother we are to choose for our infant Church—"a nursing mother with a barren womb and dry breasts?" This connection would be like a millstone hung about the neck of the Canadian Church. It reminds one of the old Greek pleasantry concerning the simpleton who in the storm lashed him-

self to the anchor. It is passing strange to think how a little petty interest, near at hand, like a small object close to the eye, will cover, and intercept from view one transcendently greater at a distance. So it is in the present controversy. A great number of ministers seem to be blind to the impending ruin which awaits the Church—the whole Church—if, to retain a paltry pension, they sacrifice her dearest liberties, rights, and interests.

We come now to the concluding inquiry, what are the adherents to principle and consistency called to do in the present emergency, either, to prevent disruption, or if that cannot be, to organize a new church upon an independent basis. I shall not presume, indeed it were premature at this moment, to trace out any course of action founded upon the anticipation of disruption. I shall rather say what we should not do. Let us first of all do nothing to compromise principle, to prejudice the spiritual interests of the church, to dishonour the faith of the Synod, already engaged to maintain inviolate the basis of absolute independence and spiritual freedom on which the well-being of the church depends. Nothing can be more plain or simple than the course of wisdom and safety, in which, should we all become happily of one mind, we may confidently hope by the blessing of God, to steer the afflicted vessel of our church, out of the midst of darkness and storm, into a haven of peace and sunshine. The evidence of the church's independence seems to me to be complete and incontrovertible. It rests upon the most solid grounds of both testimony and fact. First the testimony of our own records, especially those which have reference to the proceedings at the first formation of the Synod, for it will be found by the recorded correspondence that the Committee of the General Assembly disclaim all jurisdiction or controul over our ecclesiastical courts, while the fact that we have actually enjoyed and exercised all the

powers and rights of independence must be admitted on all hands. The words "in connection with the Church of Scotland" on which so great stress has been laid by the advocates for adherence were assumed, without any warrant or sanction from the Parent Church, and as I believe, intended to convey no other meaning than that of our being in communion with that church, and having for the most part come out from her bosom. This adjunct to the title of the Synod involves not the relation of dependence on the one side, or the right of jurisdiction on the other. It implies nothing more than the relation of origin and derivation.\*

Indeed this controversy upon the import of these very harmless and insignificant words, reminds me very forcibly of a passage in the novel of the Antiquary, which my readers I am sure will not have forgotten, and can scarcely fail to perceive the striking and ludicrous similitude. I refer to Edie Ochiltree's version of the inscription on the ladle found in a ruin, which the Antiquary would have exalted into the dignity of a Roman Prætorium. "Prætorium here, Prætorium there," says Edie, "I mind the biggin o' it." To calm the fears of the alarmists, let me say, for, like Eddie, I was present at the first meeting of Synod, and took part in the discussions, that I can divine nothing in these words more formidable or more venerable than the A. D. L. L., Aiken Drum's Lang Ladle "*Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.*" In these circumstances it will be the height of folly, and madness, should the Synod or any part of it insist upon making a wanton surrender of our undoubted right of independence, and thereby render a disruption inevitable. But should that disruption take place, the advocates of principle and consistency, will have nothing to fear. It remains to be seen

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\* See Appendix, No. 3.

and proved whether, even in the event of their being in the minority, they would necessarily incur the legal forfeiture of temporal property and endowments. Granting that they did, the loss is not irreparable, nay it is one which when viewed more narrowly, appears to be little worthy of the mighty alarm which it has created. I believe that the whole amount of the revenues which could be made available in the most favourable circumstances by our Church would not give every minister more than £60 per annum. Increase the number of our clergy, and you diminish in the same proportion the amount of salary to each. Should a disruption take place, the new Church would rise up upon a basis of freedom and Catholicity of spirit which could not fail to render her popular. She would, no doubt, tread in the footsteps of the Free Church of Scotland, by uniting the parochial and the missionary character, entering into union with all other evangelical Presbyterians, making common cause, in co-operative union, with all evangelical Protestants, seeking aid and patronage from all the churches in Europe and America that sympathize with her, and going forth boldly into the Gospel field to do the work of evangelization with all her soul, and strength, and mind, I am strong in the faith and confidence that the Lord would give her much more than all that she could lose—that her last state would be better than her first. And if I durst rely upon my own understanding and judgment, in a matter so much beyond the compass of human wisdom and sagacity, I should say that it was the issue most to be desired. It is our duty, however, not to seek but to shun change and revolution—God, who knoweth all things, only knoweth what is best, and will, no doubt, in his own good time and way, bring us to that issue which is most for his glory and the advance-



ment of the Redeemer's kingdom—It is ours meanwhile to wait for God in faith and prayer, and using all the means which our best wisdom can devise, and doing with all our might, whatsoever our hand findeth to do, let us rest in the assurance that God will provide for his people and for his Church what is meet. Let this be our motto, "Jehovah-jireh." The Lord will provide, and "Jehovah Nissi"—the Lord is our banner.

Should we be called in the Providence of God to choose between two parties, and two antagonist creeds and courses of ecclesiastical faith and practice, the solemn responsibility will then devolve upon us, both ministers and people, to decide this choice on Christian and scriptural grounds, that we may do nothing that is not conformable to the will, and conducive to the glory of God. Be assured that if any of us act on any other principle, in any other spirit, in this momentous crisis, his sin will find him out. The responsibility is great, even as the mighty interests of the Church and of religion that are involved in the issue. The guilt and condemnation will of consequence be proportionate to that responsibility. Let us solemnly determine, in the presence of that God who searcheth the heart, that whatever others do, we will act with a single eye to the glory of God; and let us be specially careful to guard ourselves against the most subtle of all snares, that of looking more to earth than to heaven, to man than to God. Let our decision be formed not upon the calculations of worldly wisdom or carnal policy, but upon the eternal truths and infallible rules of God's Holy Word. Let the only question we ask be, what does God require of me? What is due to my conscience, to my Church, to the principles of moral and religious duty, turning from this straight-onward path neither to the right hand nor to the left, nothing



faultering, nothing swerving. Let none of us shrink from making, if need be, personal sacrifices, in order to remove out of the way, whatever would obstruct the work and the will of God, in bringing about, as I believe He is doing, a general and vital reformation—reconstructing our Church upon a new and better foundation. Let us all therefore be ready to place ourselves at the disposal of Providence, and to serve in any place, function or capacity, however humble, praying that God would give us grace and strength, to embrace, if need be, poverty and reproach for his name's sake and the Gospel's.

And what is the duty of the laity to themselves, to their families, to their Church, to present and future generations in this land? It is for the laity to judge in this crisis, what confidence may be due to the opinion and the example of the Clergy who in this storm, are the pilots of the ark of the Church. Have they or have they not temporal interests personal and professional, to blind and to pervert their minds, and to lead—it may be, in some instances, to the sacrilegious betrayal of the spiritual well-being of our Church, of great truths and vital principles to secure temporal prosperity, and aggrandizement? Are there not some who, in the face of their solemn protestings against the principles and proceedings of the Established Church, have accepted benefices within her pale, and thereby identified themselves with all that she has done from first to last? Are there not some who have accepted salaries or pensions on the express condition prescribed and imposed, of *bona fide* adherence? Are there not more among the residue who expect to receive calls to congregations in Scotland, or salaries out of the funds, which, in the total absence of either missions or mission-

aries, are applied in a way which it is not possible in my mind to reconcile with incorrupt and uncorrupting integrity, with the advancement of the spiritual good of the Colonial Church, or the legitimate exercise of the influence of the Mother Church? In these circumstances, the hope of the Church at this crisis rests in a great measure upon the spirit, wisdom, energy, and unity of her lay members. It is for them to say whether this is like fair and honourable dealing, or whether they will permit the rights, liberties, and interests of the Presbyterian Church in this land to be made merchandize of. Certain it is that such practices are in palpable and gross violation of the professions which have gone forth to the world from our supreme judicatory and legislature. The ministers who have accepted these livings, and these salaries or pensions have given a practical contradiction to the decisions of our Supreme Court, and to the principles vindicated and promulgated under its sanction. You have a duty to God, to your Church, and to your country, which is paramount, and great will be your guilt and shame if you do not stand forth with Christian zeal and boldness to emulate the spirit of your godly and enlightened forefathers. It is your duty to embrace that cause and to hold it fast, which you believe on diligent and impartial enquiry will best provide for the great interests of the Church, and the great ends of religion, by introducing and spreading throughout our land a body of godly and faithful ministers and zealous missionaries. You are called, in this crisis, to form connections with all the Churches of Christ in Britain, Ireland, and America, whose sympathy and co-operation are most likely, under God's blessing, to further his cause, and to encourage and strengthen our infant Church, in this the day of

small things, to go forward in the work of the Lord with all holy boldness, having a pledge of his all-present help—his all-sufficient grace, in the united sympathy and hearty co-operation of all the Churches of Christ, more especially those who enjoy the most abundant and unequivocal tokens of his favour. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Cultivate a communion with those Churches, and let all your delight be in them, which have distinguished themselves by the abundance and success of their labours, in the conversion of souls, by the number and zeal of their missionaries at home and abroad, by the extent of the field of their evangelical enterprises, the liberality of their contributions for the spread of the gospel and the triumphs which in all departments of the work of the Lord they have won, demonstrating that it is *his spirit in them, that counsels and directs, and his hand that works with them* “according to the working of His Mighty Power, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.” I have already said that in the event of the Synod’s adherence to the established Church, cut off, as in this case, we must be from the communion of the Free Church and all other evangelical Churches, I see no hope of revival, no, not even of continuance of life for our Church in this land. I see no possible source whence we can find a supply of missionaries or means to provide for our destitution; nothing in fine, to arrest or retard the rapid decline and final and not far distant dissolution, and death of a body even now faint and languid, and possessing so far as I can see, no resources within itself for its regeneration.

I avow most unreservedly my heart-felt persuasion that God has a great work to accomplish among us which is now near, and at the very door. It may be

that such a fiery trial is about to pass over us, as that, which in the Mother Country has subjected so many to the sternest of ordeals, to test how far the spirit of God, as contra-distinguished from the spirit of the world, was in them—whether they were willing to sacrifice expediency and interest to truth and duty, and for conscience sake renouncing all their temporal endowments—with simple faith commit themselves in well-doing unto a Merciful Creator and Father. I do not say that all, who, in such a trial, may have been found to resist the temptations of worldly interest, are men of God and faithful ministers; but sure I am, that it is a very strong pledge of their being such, and that the majority of those, who are capable of making such a sacrifice, are worthy of all honour and confidence in the sight of God and man. I will say that I cannot conceive any method more effectual to sift and purify a Church, to winnow and purge thoroughly the floor—separating the chaff from the wheat. I have no doubt that in the body who come out in such a process of probation, you will find faith and piety and spiritual mindedness in more than ordinary measure; and no true Christian would have a moment's hesitation in deciding, that a preference was due to them. I have no doubt that the spirit of God and the blessing of God will rest in double measure, on a Church composed of elements thus sifted, thus refined. Such a body, I believe the Free Church of Scotland to be—and such in some measure I doubt not will be the new ecclesiastical organization which may be expected to be formed in this land, should disruption be the result of the present differences. In the event of such a revolution being wrought, at this time in our Church, let us realize in it the hand of Him who is “like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap,” and who, in a season of spiritual de-

cline and backsliding in His ancient Church of Israel, speaking by the mouth of the Prophet Malachi, to the Priests, the sons of Levi, said, "He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness, then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." Should our Synod unhappily prove false to those principles, to which, on the ground of their intrinsic truth and paramount importance, it has pledged its faith before God and all the world, it is not possible for me to conceive, how any Christian man could continue in connection with a body, who had thus manifestly forfeited all title to the blessing of God, and even to the common respect of mankind. This, it will be said, is strong language. I know it is ; but is it not true ? And ought it not to be spoken now ere it be too late ? The Rubicon is not yet passed. I would adjure and beseech my brethren, not only as they fear God, but as they regard man, to remember that at this moment all eyes are upon them, that they will be subjected to a rigorous scrutiny—to an unsparing severity of judgment before the tribunal of the world—and happy will it be for those who can say, with the heroic monarch of France, after his defeat, "all is lost but honour." I speak after the manner of men ; but there is a higher tribunal than that of the world, a more dread retribution than its condemnation ; and I would conclude by pointing to the solemn and appalling language of the Great Head of the Church, the Judge of all the earth : "And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it ; but whosoever shall

lose his life for my sake and the gospel's the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." Mark viii. 34-38.

I have thus endeavoured to show, with what success my readers must judge, that the principles—which lie at the foundation of the Free Church controversy, we are bound to maintain, as much as in us lie, at whatever cost, unless we are prepared to resist the clearest and most certain evidence of truth, nay the eternal and immutable obligations of moral duty—unless we are prepared to violate the faith of our public, solemn, and united pledge as a Synod—unless we are prepared to blast all the hopes of general and permanent prosperity, temporal and spiritual, which human wisdom can build upon, in estimating the future prospects of our Church, and what is more than all, unless we are prepared to expect the blessing of God, which alone can make or mar, can save or destroy, upon a Church whose ministers have trampled upon their vows and pledges, and whose foundations will therefore be laid in a sacrifice of principle to expediency, of faith and a good conscience to maxims of worldly wisdom, carnal policy, and selfish calculation.

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## APPENDIX.

[No. 1.]

### PETITION TO THE QUEEN, IN BEHALF OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

*To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.*

The Petition of the Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian  
Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland,  
in General Synod assembled,

HUMBLY SHEWETH :

That your Petitioners, Your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects, crave leave to approach the throne, to represent to your most gracious Majesty, the high veneration entertained by them for the established Church of Scotland, and their affectionate sympathy with her, in those painful trials to which she is exposed, from the collision that has occurred between the ecclesiastical and civil tribunals, and to express their apprehension that unless a speedy termination be put to them, by Legislative authority, the most disastrous consequences must inevitably ensue.

May it therefore please your Majesty, in conjunction with the two Houses of Parliament, to give effect to such measures as shall maintain and secure all the just rights and claims of the established Church of Scotland, and in particular that the wishes of the people may be duly regarded in the settlement of their Ministers, and that the secular courts be restrained from all interference in the spiritual concerns of the Church.

In name, presence and by appointment of the Synod at Kingston, July 5, 1841.

(Signed)

JAMES GEORGE,

*Moderator.*

[No. 2.]

The Synod having maturely considered the Overture from the Presbytery of Hamilton, respecting a testimony by this Church concerning the great questions which have been recently agitating the Church and Kingdom of Scotland, and the rights and privileges of the Church of Christ involved therein, and the bearing which the recent determination of these questions in

Scotland may have on the condition and relations of this Church, Resolved,—

1. That this Synod record their solemn testimony on behalf of the Supreme Headship of Christ over His Church—the rights which he has conferred on its duly constituted office-bearers to rule and minister in it independently of all external control—and the privileges he has bestowed on his people of exercising a free concurrence in the appointment of such office-bearers; as these various principles have recently been contended for by the Church of Scotland;—The Synod having heretofore entertained an assured conviction that these rights and privileges were substantially recognized in the Constitution of the Church of Scotland, as well as in those Acts of the Civil Government by which she has enjoyed the advantages of an Establishment, and firmly believing that they have full warrant in the Word of God, and that the maintaining them in their integrity is essential to the well being of the Church, and so far from being incompatible with, is indispensable to a right and salutary alliance between the Church and the State.

2. That this Synod regard with the utmost pain and alarm the conduct of the supreme authorities in the State, in rejecting the claims recently made by the Church of Scotland for a more distinct recognition of the spiritual independence of her Judicators and the privileges of her members, and in refusing her the protection she has been constrained to demand against recent encroachments of the civil courts on that spiritual province so distinctly recognized in the Word of God, as belonging to His Church, and for the maintenance of which many of the Scottish Reformers and Confessors in different ages, and of all ranks have testified unto the death, And the Synod record their earnest prayer to Almighty God, that He would of His grace, and by His good Spirit so turn the hearts of all concerned, that the deep wound which, through these encroachments has been inflicted on the venerable and honoured Church of our Fathers, and the grievous breaches which have thereby been occasioned, may be healed and repaired, and that the full benefits of a National Establishment constituted and administered on Scriptural principles, may ever be enjoyed by the people of Scotland.

3. That holding the aforesaid principles and views,—feeling specially called in present circumstances to renew their former testimonies in regard to them,—and trusting that they shall ever be enabled at all hazards faithfully to maintain them, even if called to resist any actual encroachment on them, in their own ecclesiastical administration; this Synod have yet to record their gratitude to God that He in His good Providence does not call on them to enter on the discussion or decision for themselves of the practical bearings of those principles in respect either to any infringement of the spiritual independence of this Church, or of the privileges of its members, or to the connection which subsists between the Church of Scotland and this Synod,—that connection neither implying a spiritual jurisdiction on the part of the former



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over the latter, nor involving the latter in a responsibility for any actings of the former. And this Synod do now, as always, recognize the imperious obligations laid on them of seeking the peace and well-being of the Presbyterian Church of Canada; at the expense of any sacrifice, save that of consistency and principle.

4. That this Synod, while viewing with humble thankfulness the favourable circumstances in which the members, office-bearers, and Judicators of this Church are placed in regard to their perfect exemption from secular interference with their Spiritual privileges or functions, and the absence of the temptations which such interference might occasion to discord and disunion in the Church do yet regard with the deepest concern the present condition and prospects of the Church of Scotland; and do hereby record their deep and affectionate sympathy with those of her rulers and members, who, leaving the Establishment at the bidding of conscience, have thereby sacrificed temporal interests and personal feelings to an extent that must ever command the respect and admiration of the Christian Church.

The Synod had long reasoning, and after having engaged in prayer for the Divine Blessing and direction, the vote was taken, First, on the Resolutions of Mr. Gale and those of Professor Campbell;—and there voted for Mr. Gale's 29; for Mr. Campbell's 10; when Mr. Campbell's were declared to be lost.

The vote was next taken on the Resolutions of Mr. Gale and that of Dr. Liddell; when there voted for Mr. Gale's, 26; and for Dr. Liddell's, 13. Dr. Liddell's was accordingly declared to be lost.

The vote was next taken on the Resolutions of Mr. Gale and those of Mr. Stark; when there voted for Mr. Gale's, 24; and for Mr. Stark's, 11; five not voting. Mr. Stark's were accordingly declared to be lost.

The vote was taken on Mr. Gale's Resolutions, Aye or No, when there voted Aye, 28; No. 11. Mr. Gale's Resolutions were accordingly adopted.

Against this decision Professor Campbell gave in his dissent, in his own name and for as many as might adhere to him, for reasons to be given in;—when there adhered to this dissent Dr. Mathieson, Mr. Mann, Mr. Reid, Mr. McNaughton, Mr. McMurchy, and Mr. Lambie, ministers;—and Mr. Archibald Brown, elder.

#### [No. 3.]

The following extract from a Scottish newspaper, of the 22d May, 1841, lately communicated to me by a friend, will afford additional confirmation of the truth of our position, that the Canadian Church is independent:—

*Case of Mr. Andrew of New Brunswick.*—Mr. Candlish stated this case, which arose out of Mr. Andrew being first cut off from

connection with the Synod of New Brunswick, (from some cause not explained), and then deposed from the office of the ministry by the Presbytery there. Mr. Candlish explained, that the Church of Scotland could not review the first sentence, as it was the act of an independent body, with which they could not interfere; but he thought that the second sentence was erroneous, because, by the first he was placed completely beyond their jurisdiction, and his subsequent conduct fell under the cognizance of the Presbytery that ordained him—the Presbytery of Edinburgh. He should, therefore, move, that the Assembly cannot review the sentence of a Colonial Church Court, in reference to a minister ordained and licensed by this Church, while he holds a church in the colonies, and is subject to their jurisdiction; but, if from any cause that connection is brought to an end, he then reverts back under the cognizance and jurisdiction of the Courts of this Church. They also find, that no congregation in the colonies can be recognised by this Church, which is not in connection with the Colonial Church Courts. They find, further, that if Mr. Andrew contravene the sentence of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, regarding his deposition, it will be the duty of the Presbytery of Edinburgh to proceed against him according to the laws of the Church.

This motion was then agreed to, and the Assembly adjourned at half-past ten o'clock.

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Extracts from the letter of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the British Colonies, in connection with the Church of Scotland, dated May 23rd, 1840.

In regard to those of our countrymen, however, who have settled in the colonial possessions and dependencies of Great Britain, it is a satisfaction to us to know, that, to a certain extent, at least, the blessings of a Gospel ministry are enjoyed—that there are many faithful servants of the Lord Jesus labouring among their fellow-countrymen in word and ordinances—and that, in the more important of our Colonies, a platform has been erected for giving full effect to all the excellencies of the Presbyterian system. We watched with much interest over the formation of ecclesiastical judicatories in the Colonial settlements; and from the time of their establishment, we have had the happiness, in almost every instance, of marking an improvement in every thing connected with the religious condition of the Presbyterian settlers from Scotland.

To the Colonial Churches which have been thus organized, we feel that the spiritual interests of the Scottish population may safely be entrusted—that they no longer require our direct interference—and that, whatever benefits we wish to communicate, may be best conveyed through the office-bearers of the different

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Synods or Presbyteries. This is due, we should fondly hope, in most instances, to the character of the individuals whom we ordained as ministers for Colonial stations. The spirit of Presbytery also seems to us to require, that the right of government should not, in ordinary cases, extend beyond the limits of representation. And these limits may safely be determined by considerations of convenience, from the inherent power of the Presbyterian system, as a scriptural institute, to adapt itself to every variety of circumstances.

But, while we decline all authoritative jurisdiction over the Colonial Presbyterian Churches, we can never cease to cherish the warmest interest in their welfare; and we consider ourselves authorized—as our Christian sympathies may prompt, or as their circumstances may require—to address to them the words of counsel and exhortation, of encouragement or reproof; and when offered in the spirit of love, we feel assured that they will be received in the same spirit.

The following passage of this most excellent letter, coming from an authority which they profess to revere as paramount, I would specially recommend to the attention of the Presbyteries of Bathurst and Montreal, and those ministers who, in manifest contempt of their Supreme Ecclesiastical Court, have given in their *bona fide* adherence to the Establishment:—

As honoured to bear rule in the Church of Christ, keep constantly in mind the great ends for which the great Head of the Church has committed a system of government to the office-bearers in his spiritual house—that order should be maintained, that ordinances be rightly administered, that due means be employed for repressing vice and error, and for encouraging the progress of knowledge and righteousness—and in the meetings of your courts, let all your proceedings, whether legislative or judicial, be conducted with an eye to these important ends. Let the different Courts, Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, be kept in due subordination the one to the other. It is essential to the existence of the Presbyterian system, that individual members of the Church, and that inferior judicatories, should yield a ready obedience to their spiritual superiors! so that, while no one individual possesses jurisdiction over the rest, all should be subject to the voice of the whole.